

Maryland Federal Facilities Profile

Department of Agriculture (USDA)



1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250
202-720-2791
www.usda.gov

Secretary: Thomas J Vilsack

Department: Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Maryland Employees: 2,895

History & Mission: In 2012, USDA commemorated and celebrated its 150th anniversary. Founded in 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law an act of Congress establishing the United States Department of Agriculture. Two and one-half years later, in what would be his final annual message to the Congress; Lincoln called USDA "The People's Department." At that time, about half of all Americans lived on farms, compared with about 2 percent today. But through our work on food, agriculture, economic development, science, natural resource conservation and a host of issues, USDA still fulfills Lincoln's vision - touching the lives of every American, every day.

The Department of Agriculture works to improve and maintain farm income and to develop and expand markets abroad for agricultural products. The Department helps to curb and cure poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. It works to enhance the environment and to maintain production capacity by helping landowners protect the soil, water, forests, and other natural resources. Through inspection and grading services, it safeguards and ensures standards of quality in the daily food supply. It has a vision to provide economic opportunity through innovation, helping rural America to thrive; to promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while also helping feed others throughout the world; and to preserve our nation's natural resources through conservation, restored forests, improved watersheds, and healthy private working lands.

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Maryland Facilities

Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agriculture Research Center (BARC) (Prince George's County)*
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) (Prince George's County)*

Foreign Disease-Weed Science Research Unit (FDWSRU) (Frederick County)

*Separate profile available

Resources

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[Technology Transfer](#)

Branches and Contacts

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Small Business Innovation and Research Program

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Federal Facilities Profile

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Office of Technology Transfer

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[Office of Technology Transfer](#)

Foreign Disease-Weed Science Research (FDWSR)

History & Mission: In 1862, the Agricultural Department of the U.S. Patent Office was established as an independent entity, the USDA. FDWSRU has been located at Fort Detrick since the late 1960s or early 1970s.

The mission of the Foreign Disease program is to develop techniques for the rapid detection and identification of new and emerging crop pathogens. The mission of the Weed Biological Control program is to collect foreign pathogens overseas from weeds in their native habitat, and to evaluate, characterize and release the pathogens in the U.S. for biological control of introduced weeds, leading to improved, sustainable weed control practices in agricultural systems with reduced dependence on chemical herbicides.

The overall goal of the weed research is to support sustainable agriculture by assisting American agriculture in eliminating its reliance on chemicals for control of weeds. Research is conducted in support of other U.S. government agencies that require containment or which need assistance in answers to emergency situations concerning new diseases.

Divisions:

- Foreign Disease Program
- Weed Biological Control Program

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Frederick County

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[Website](#)

[Staff Listing](#)
